What It's All About

Posted on Jun 15, Posted by Lois Lowry Category Uncategorized

My grandsons, 10 and 8, came to visit yesterday.p They had hoped to spend the Sunday afternoon on their dad's boat on the lake...but it was raining and so we stayed in, played board games, and watched the Red Sox get trounced in Philadelphia.

This is their last week of the school year, and the older boy, finishing fifth grade, told me that his class had just finished reading my book "Gossamer."

He and I were standing in the kitchen when he told me this. Then he said, "You know what? Remember the scene where the boy, John, describes a kid he knew (*yeah, right*, said my grandson, nudging me and winking) whose dad made him eat dogfood?"

Yes, I told him, I remembered the scene where the abused child reveals what his past has been like.

"Well," my grandson said, "In my head, while the teacher read, I pictured this kitchen!" He looked around. "I could see the dogfood bowl there, by the refrigerator."

We both looked to the spot he was pointing to, and I think we were both recalling the little boy whose father had forced him to crouch on the floor and eat canned dogfood from a bowl.

"And you know what? I'm the only kid in my class who has seen this kitchen. So every other kid was picturing a different kitchen!"

Years ago, in a book called "Rabble Starkey," I described the moment when a girl, being read to

from Steinbeck's "The Red Pony," realizes that she can see the dog named Smasher in her mind, using the bits of description the author has given....but that the others, listening, were creating their own mental pictures of dogs, using the same clues. "We each had our own private Smasher," she says.

My grandson and I talked briefly about how TV doesn't let you do that.p I didn't think to tell Grey about the private Smasher.p But maybe I'll find a copy of that old book and give it to him.

At the moment, though, he is very absorbed in Percy Jackson and The Olympians.

Tags: Untagged